1:Srinivas E-5 (1940-42)1952 AW5 Coorg AW5

a joint family speaking Koḍagi while another speaks Kannaḍa. Until recently Coorgs living south of Mercara had a prejudice against marrying those living in the north. The latter were regarded as inferior and derisively referred to as those living 'beyond the hills' (*boṭṭat mēlé*), the implication being that Coorgs south of Mercara were the best Coorgs.

Coorgs formed a compact unit in relation to other castes. They possessed wealth and power, they liked dancing, competitive games involving the exercise of skill and strength, hunting, and soldiering. In the Vēdic or classical caste system these virtues are attributed to Kshatriyas, the caste of warriors and kings, who are next only to the Brahmin in the hierarchy. The resemblances between Coorgs and the Vēdic Kshatriyas are striking indeed in the matter of values, and it is understandable that Coorgs should regard themselves as Kshatriyas. But the classical Kshatriyas, as one of the three 'twice-born' castes, were entitled to perform certain rituals at which sacred verses (*mantras*) from the Vēdas were recited by the priests. Coorgs do not perform any of these rituals and Vēdic *mantras* are not recited when a Coorg is given a name, or marries, or dies.

Coorgs, like other Caste Hindus, object very strongly to the eating of beef, and the strength of their objection was early recognized by the British who banned all slaughter of cattle for the table in Coorg in 1835. But the Coorg dietary includes pork and liquor, and this is occasionally singled out for comment by the other castes. The correlation between status and dietary is particularly strong in the interior of south India, and the Coorg claim to be considered as Kshatriyas comes up against this fact. Coorgs rightly point out that the Rajputs of north India eat pork and that this has not prevented them from being generally regarded as Kshatriyas. However, Rajputs eat only the wild pig and not the domesticated one.

In the Sanskritic myth (*Kāvēri Purāṇa* or *Kāvēri Māhātmya*) about the River Kāvēri, Coorgs are said to be Ugras,[1] or the descendants of the marriage of a Kshatriya prince and his Shūdra wife. The Kāvēri Myth thus cleverly reconciles the economic and

[1] Ugra means 'strong, formidable, terrible, violent, angry, passionate, cruel, fierce, pungent, hot, high and noble. It is also the name of a mixed tribe, descended from a Kshatriya father and Shudra mother, and of Malabar.' M. Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, Oxford, 1899, p. 172.

1:Srinivas E-5 (1940-42)1952 AW5 Coorg AW5

ritual purity becomes, in this case, an index of the degree of concern in the festival. What is interesting to note is the widespread systematization of 'concern' in Coorg culture. The mother of the newly born infant has to observe pollution for a longer period than other relatives; and first-grade mourners have to observe mourning for a longer period than others. Not only the length of the period but also the number and character of the restrictions observed are used to mark off those with greater 'concern' in the event from those with less 'concern'. The greater the 'concern' the greater the bond.

The festival of a village-deity usually includes a ritual fast or *paṭṇi*: a day towards the end of the festival is called '*paṭṇi* day' and the villagers observe a ritual fast on this day. The fast day usually occurs before the festival (*nammé*) day. The festival day is regarded as the most important day of the festival, elaborate ritual being performed on this day, at the end of which animals are sacrificed. The various restrictions observed during the festival are broken on the festival day, usually towards evening. A big feast follows, which includes meat dishes and liquor, prohibited until now.

A ritual fast does not necessarily mean actual abstention from food. Frequently a ritual fast means only abstention from everyday food, and that too interpreted very narrowly. For instance, cooked rice grains and vegetable curry are the normal food among Coorgs, and this is prohibited at a ritual fast. But while cooked rice grains are prohibited, dishes made with rice-flour are not.

On the fast day Coorgs miss a meal, instead of which they consume pancakes made of rice-flour, and *pāyasa*, a sweet liquid dish made with split green gram. Pancackes and green gram *pāyasa* are very commonly eaten during ritual fasts in the Tamil country.

Coorgs are forbidden to eat pancakes and green gram *pāyasa* during weddings and while birth- and death-pollution last. As far as they are concerned this diet seems to be confined to the fast day during the festival of a village-deity. It is difficult to see the purpose of the fast day during the festival of a village-deity. While the observance of a ritual fast on the festival day till the rites are completed is understandable, a ritual fast on the day before the festival day is not easy to understand, especially if the villagers are permitted to eat the normal festival diet on the morning of the festival day. The fast day seems to exist quite

1:Srinivas E-5 (1940-42)1952 AW5 Coorg AW

unrelated to the rest of the structure of the festival of a village-deity.[1]

X

Some of the ritual acts performed and practices observed at mourning are obviously reversals or inversions of the acts and practices performed on good-sacred or auspicious occasions. For instance, the corpse is made to lie on a mat spread with the underside on top. It is true that like the subject of *mangala* the corpse is dressed in a white gown, but the latter is reversed in some way: it is worn with the underside uppermost, or with the left end of the gown coming on top of the right end. On auspicious occasions the proper side has to be on top, and the right end should rest on top of the left.

After the corpse has been laid in the grave, the surviving spouse throws three handfuls of earth into the grave. He (or she) twists his hand (*terangai* = twisted hand) while throwing the earth into the grave. The eldest son and other relatives follow the surviving spouse. If the corpse is going to be cremated instead of being buried, the surviving spouse sets fire to the pyre by thrusting a firebrand into it. Again, he employs the twisted hand while setting fire to the pyre (*terangolli* = twisted firebrand).

In ritual circumambulation, movement in the clockwise direction is prescribed for auspicious occasions, while anti-clockwise movement is prescribed for inauspicious occasions. The groom goes round the sacred tripod stool clockwise. A devotee goes round the temple clockwise. But the mourners go round the funeral pyre in the anti-clockwise way. Similarly, the bier is thrice carried round the paved yard before the mourning-house, the bier carriers moving anti-clockwise.

There is an interesting little problem here: while clockwise movement is restricted to auspicious occasions and anti-clockwise movement to inauspicious occasions, on both kinds of occasion the subject goes round thrice. That is to say, both the mourner as well as the groom goes round *thrice*. How is it that the principle

[1] The restrictions observed during the village-deity's festival vary from village to village. As regards the food restrictions observed on the fast day the general idea seems to be to avoid everyday diet and to starve oneself as far as possible. In some festivals only roots and boiled plantains are allowed. Steam-baked pudding (*puṭṭ*), a favourite dish of Coorgs, is prohibited in some places. Green gram *pdyasa* (liquid dish) is generally allowed except in a few villages.

1:Srinivas E-5 (1940-42)1952 AW5 Coorg AW5

Guḷika is different from Kūḷi which merely means a spirit or ghost. Kūḷis are troublesome spirits which cause illness, possess people, and have to be propitiated with offerings of food and drink.

XVI

The ancestral house has a special importance to a Coorg: he regards it as sacred, he is bound by very powerful ties to it, and he considers it the proper place where the marriage of a member should be celebrated and where his funeral should be performed. Even today the various branches of an *okka* gather together at the ancestral house during the harvest festival and during the Kāvēri festival. They also gather together for the festival of the local village-deity which may be held annually or biennially, and for the performance of ancestor-propitiation.

The house is swept and cleaned every day, and on special ritual occasions such as a festival or ancestor-propitiation, its walls are colour-washed, and the floor washed with a solution of cow-dung, a common purifying agent all over India. A festival is also a holiday, and the men abstain from agricultural work and perform festival tasks such as hanging up festoons of mango leaves on the lintel above the main door. Everyone has a bath and changes into clean clothes brought by the washerman. A festival also means a feast and the feast may be either vegetarian or non-vegetarian. All over south India the feasts which are a part of calendar festivals may not include non-vegetarian dishes—this is an idea implicit in Sanskritic Hinduism. Non-Brahmins usually prepare non-vegetarian dishes on the day following the feast.

Coorgs follow other Hindus in preparing purely vegetarian dishes on festival days. Even the ancestors are offered vegetarian dishes at these calendar festivals. But on those occasions which are exclusively devoted to the worship of ancestors meat and pork dishes and arrack are the preferred offerings to them. Some village-deities again require offerings of non-vegetarian dishes and liquor at festivals in their honour.

Another aspect of calendar festivals needs to be referred to here: festivals such as the festival of arms and the harvest festival include games like shooting at a target, running a race, throwing a stone, &c. These games prove an occasion for the expression of the rivalry that exists between the *okkas* in a village or *nāḍ*. Such an

1:Srinivas E-5 (1940-42)1952 AW5 Coorg AW5

ankle and this enabled Saturn to possess him. Subsequently Naḷa lost his throne, was separated from his beloved wife, became deformed owing to serpent-bite, and finally ended up as cook to a king.

It is said in Coorg that Saturn jumped on Naḷa while the latter was standing under a *tāṇḍi* tree. Coorgs usually utter Naḷa's name when they have to pass under a *tāṇḍi* tree, and this is said to have the effect of warding off Saturn.

The above restrictions make the story of Naḷa, which is known to all Hindus, more immediate to Coorgs. The observance of common restrictions frequently marks off one community from another. Such observance can become a symbol of the community's solidarity and identity.

Coorgs, like other Hindus, regard the cow as sacred, and are opposed to killing it. They also abstain from eating beef. The cow has recently figured prominently in Hindu-Muslim relations and has come to be a symbol for Hindu solidarity and identity. Orthodox Hindu opinion regards the killing of cattle with abhorrence, even though the refusal to kill the vast number of useless cattle which exist in India today is detrimental to the economy of the nation.

Reverence for the cow unites Coorgs with other Hindus. It marks both off from other communities living in India.

Certain Sanskritic theological ideas have profoundly affected the lives of Coorgs. Ideas about *karma* and *dharma* are widespread among Coorgs, not only amongst the educated but also amongst the uneducated peasantry. The Coorg funeral song abounds in Sanskritic theological ideas: a man dies 'when the ration of rice kept for him by God Nārāyaṇa is finished'. After death, a bad man goes to hell (*naraka*) and a good man to heaven (*swarga*). A man is continually reborn till he attains salvation (*mōkshu*). The surviving relatives pray that the dead man may not be reborn either as man or beast, because being implies suffering. They pray that he may go to heaven and not return to earth any more.

V

Sanskritic Hinduism has a plasticity which enables it to absorb local religious phenomena. Sanskritic deities frequently undergo changes in the process of being localized. An example will make

3:Iyer E-5 (no date) 1948 AW5 Coorg AW5

Hunting and Fishing

The Coorgs have been skilful hunters, and still keep up their hunting habits. Their chief weapons were the gun and the big knife in addition to the small handy waist knife. They no longer use the bow and arrow, or the sling. The long matchlock gun has gone out of use, and the wealthier Coorgs are now equipped with English guns and rifles of the best kind. The big broad-bladed curved Coorg knife, *odikathi*, is a most formidable weapon in a hand-to-hand fight. The bulk of them hunt partly for sport, and partly to supplement their vegetable diet. Pigs are coursed with dogs, brought to bay, and killed with spears, which are short, heavy, and broad in the blade, or with ordinary fighting spears. Old boars fight fiercely, and hunters are sometimes wounded or killed. Most animals are trapped. When they go hunting in a party, they have dogs which are set on tracking. When they bark, and the hunters approach, the animal is disturbed. It tries to run away or charges them. In the latter case they aim at the animal with guns and kill it.

In their spare moments the Coorgs fish in streams, rivers and tanks. They use nets. The ordinary one is the *thaduvala* which is spread across the stream to prevent fish from escaping. At a distance of about a furlong, they spread another net so as to drive the fish within the net. When the nets are brought closer, many fish are caught by hand. They use also another net known as *beesvala* by which they catch fish by shooting and throwing baits.

Dietary

The Coorgs have an abundant variety of food materials. They eat pigs and goats. Their chief article of food is rice, and on festive occasions cakes and sweetmeats are prepared. Earthenware vessels are used. Their kitchens are remarkable for the cleanliness of their cooking vessels in use which are in charge of the cook. Like their Hindu sisters, the Coorg women attend on elderly members before they take meals. Before serving the meals, a little of the cooked food is offered to the family deity at the Kanni-kombare. They take an early breakfast of rice seasoned with curds and pickles. A substantial meal is taken at noon with rice and curry. At 3 p.m. kanji is again taken, and in the evening a hearty meal of boiled rice with vegetable and meat curry and other condiments. Toddy tapped from the bastard sago palm, arrack and a kind of beer made of fermented rice, brandy are the usual beverages. Of late European liquors have become common beverages at festivities.

Coorg Hospitality

The Coorg women deserve much for their industry. They rise very early, clean the kitchen, and do all kinds of work. They bear the

764
783 **Disposal of the Dead**

The Amma Coorgs used to bury the dead which is now being abandoned. Pollution lasts for ten days.

241 **Occupation**

The Amma Coorgs are agriculturists They do all agricultural operations, ploughing, sowing and harvesting. Both men and women work.

Conclusion

428 The Amma Coorgs follow the Coorgs in point of inheritance. They
771 worship the Hindu deities and observe Hindu holidays. They are inferior
142 to the Coorgs in physical appearance and strength of body. They are now
262 trying to improve their condition. They are strict vegetarians. They
582 marry within the same *gotra* This may eventually hasten their extinction.

[P 69 ff. have not been Processed for this file]

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

Nutmeg (Myristica); the wild Cashew-nut (Anacardium occidentale—*Can.* Géru-mara); the Indian Gutta tree (Isonandra acuminata), a large tree with beautiful foliage and oil yielding nuts; the Bastard Sago (Caryota urens—*Can.* Beini-mara) from which an agreeable toddy is drawn while from the pith sago may be prepared; the Hog-plum tree (Spondias mangifera—*Can.* Ambatte-mara); the wild clove tree (Eugenia).

A most remarkable and truly majestic forest tree is the Lepurandra Saccidora, which deserves to be classed with Thomson's

> "Lofty trees, to ancient song unknown,
> The noble sons of potent heat and floods
> Proue-rushing from the clouds."

It flowers in October in very peculiar catkins, something like a common mulberry. The fruit is in size and shape like a small fig, covered with a beautiful purple coloured down. The Coorgs manufacture very curious sacks from the bark. A branch is cut corresponding to the length and diameter of the sack wanted. It is soaked a little and then beaten with clubs until the liber separates from the wood. This done, the sack formed of the bark is turned inside out and pulled down close to the extremity, where the wood is cut off leaving a thin piece to form the bottom of the sack. These sacks were formerly much used for carrying rice, some of them may be seen in the Mysore Museum. Very different in size, but of far greater importance than the sack tree, is the Poison-nut tree,—"Strychnos nux vomica"—which may be found near it. The wood of this tree is hard and durable, its leaves oval and glossy; the small greenish white flowers appear in February; the fruit is of the size of an orange and in its white harmless pulp are embedded many round flat seeds, from which the powerful poison "Strychnine" is obtained. On open sunny woodsides grow Lobelia nicotianifolia, a stout annual plant with showy white flowers in terminal racemes,

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5
Yerava AW62
Kurumba AW56

C 137 delicate light green foliage of linear lanceolate leaves a most graceful feathery appearance. When in blossom the bamboo is leafless and the extremities are covered with flowers like one large compound panicle. The seed is in size and appearance like oats or small paddy. It is eaten by the poorer classes, but considered unwholesome. The birds and rats, however, revel in the feast of plenty. The water into which bamboo seed has largely fallen is said to be particularly noxious.

C [262] [735] [823]

Y K 313 The cutting of bamboo, is a difficult task that is rarely well done by any other than those expert jungle people, the Yerawas and Kurumbas. For the purpose of cutting a single reed they manage to climb over the lower thorny mass to where the reeds branch out freely about 10 or 15 feet above the ground and cut them at that height. To level the whole clump, the Yerawa has to cut the stem of each bamboo below and above his head, removing each piece from the thorny embrace of the rest; he thus boldly advances into the clump, and the further he progresses in his work the greater is the danger of the whole clump suddenly giving way at the slightest breeze and crushing the unfortunate intruder.

Y 313

C 137 There are several kinds of bamboo, the one described is, however, the most common. The reeds of another kind are much smaller and solid and are known by the name of Male-bamboos.

C 137 313 One of the handsomest trees in the eastern jungles is the *Blackwood* or Dalbergia latifolia with a stem of 2 or 3 feet in diameter and 60 to 80 feet in height. It is one of the most valuable timber trees in India and little, if at all, inferior to the South American Rosewood, which it closely resembles in many particulars. Near neighbours of Blackwood are *Matti* and *Hony*. The *Matti* or Terminalia coriacea is remarkable for its excellent timber, and is easily recognised by its thick ash-coloured bark, cracked into small tablets like the scales

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

(Xanthochymus pictorius?) forms a striking contrast to the former. Its branches commence near the ground, and covered with elongated dark green glossy leaves form as they ascend a gently inclined cone. The fruit of the size of an orange and beautifully yellow is rather acid, but it is eagerly sought after and eaten by the natives.

A graceful vegetable beauty of a different character is presented to view by the *Bilwára tree* (Mimosa) which with its spreading airy crown of tiny pinnate leaves and small white fragrant flowers is a graceful jungle ornament. The wood is very hard and strong. Near banks of streams and water courses the Coldera bush or *Fragrant Screwpine* (Pandanus odoratissimus) is commonly found and much used for making mats and umbrellas. In many arid places in the east and north of Coorg the *Dwarf date palm* (Phoenix farinifera) nearly monopolizes the ground. Its leaves are made into mats and baskets and from the small stem a farinaceous substance is prepared for food. A hillock of date palms before the hot season in January presents the appearance of, what we hope may be a thing of the past, a bored coffee estate.

At Fraserpet in the compound of the Coorg Superintendent's Bungalow there are a few trees of the valuable *Divi-divi* or Shumach tree (Caesalpinia Coriaria). It is a small umbrageous tree and would do very well for coffee-shading, and its incurved oblong pods contain about 50 per cent of tannin, the price of which varies in Europe from £8 to £13 a ton, so that its cultivation might pay as a commercial enterprise.

Thus these eastern jungles contain a number of useful trees. I would now add a few trees, growing in the open, but thriving re....kably well in Coorg, viz: the several representatives of the Ficus tribe, especially the Banian tree (Ficus Indica), of which there are some beautiful specimens near

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

137 Fraserpet to which the elegant lines of Southey so truly apply:—

"It was a goodly sight to see
That venerable tree.
For over the lawn irregularly spread,
Fifty straight columns propt its lofty head;
And many a long depending shoot,
Seeking to strike its root,
Straight like a plummet, grew towards the ground,
Some on the lower boughs, which crost their way,
Fixing their bearded fibres, round and round.
Some to the passing wind at times, with sway
Of gentle motion swang.
Others of younger growth, unmoved, were hung
Like stone drops from the cavern's fretted height.
Beneath was smooth and fair to sight,
Nor weeds nor briars deformed the natural floor
And through the leaf-cope which bower'd it over
Came gleams of checkered light.
So like a temple did it seem, that there
A pious heart's first impulse would be prayer."

(*The Curse of Kehama*, Book 13.)

The *Pippal* (Ficus religiosa) is likewise a large tree and found nearly in every temple in Coorg, but growing best in the drier districts. This tree proves most destructive to neglected buildings; when once rooted in crevices, nothing can withstand its progress. More common than both preceding trees [262] is the *Atti-mara* or "Ficus glomerata" with fruit much like the common fig and which is eaten by the natives. The *Indian Caoutchouc tree* "Ficus elastica" also occurs and is [314] not only a useful but highly ornamental tree. The milky juice obtained from incisions into the bark is exposed to the air, when the *Caoutchouc* or elastic substance spontaneously separates, leaving a foetid whey-coloured liquid.

[655] Almost a stranger to Coorg and growing only in several places along the Kávéri between Fraserpet and Sómawarpet,

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

it is an unsavoury pet, and its capricious and vindictive temper, when getting old, render it a dangerous playmate for children. 136*

The grey or Hanumán monkey (Semnopithecus entellus, Dufl)—*Kg.* Kóde—prefers a more open country and does not shun the neighbourhood of native dwellings, where there are Upali trees of the fruit of which it is very fond. Troops of them may sometimes be seen on an open glade near a large tree, gambolling unmindful of the passing by of a native, but quickly disappearing in the dense foliage on the appearance of a European, chattering all the while with their little ones, whose frightened expression is pitiful, clinging to their sides. This monkey is considerably larger than the former species and has a long tail, which is of service in gymnastic feats on slender branches. Its face is bare and rather reddish. It is more docile than the black monkey, but when big more vindictive and dangerous. A case happened in Mercara, where one of these monkeys attacked a baby in its cradle and might have killed it, but for the timely arrival of the parents.

The brown monkey—*Kg.* Mucha—is only found in the Mále-kádu and eagerly hunted by the Coorgs, who eat its flesh roasted and in curry, and consider it a great delicacy. A soup made of its flesh is given to sick and weakly people. When full grown, this monkey is in a sitting posture about two feet high; it has a long tail, a light grey face and chest. It is never kept as a pet by natives. Of the skin of all the three named species the Coorgs make their tom toms or drums. [224] [262] [231] [534]

A little animal of the Lemur kind is the slender *Loris* (Loris gracilis. Linn). The Coorgs call them Chínge-kóli or devils of the Chínge or soapnut shrub which grows all over the central and northern plateau of Coorg. Its silent and slow gait, its thin limbs, its closely set and large protruding eyes and pointed visage are enough to frighten on a sudden en-

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

black roundish spots. It is 2½ or 3 feet high and 4 feet long from the tip of the nose to the root of the tail. 136*

The tiger-cat (*Can.* huli-bekku) is a cheeta in miniature and its sleek, glossy, speckled fur renders it a very beautiful animal. It is about 3 feet long and 15 inches high; it is destructive to fowls. The Holeyas eat it.

The black jungle-cat (kabbekku), of the size of a house-cat, but with pointed muzzle, is very common; it lives chiefly on the fruit of the wild fig tree and sago palm. The Coorgs are fond of its flesh. Similar to this in form, but different in colour is the civet-cat (punugina bekku) which yields a peculiar musky secretion. [262]

The hyæna (katte kiruba) is very seldom seen. Of the dog-family there is, besides the Pariah, the wild dog (*Can.* kennai). In resemblance it approaches nearest the wolf. It is a powerful and dangerous brute, remarkable for the strength of its neck and jaws. Its colour is reddish brown, and in size it is like a Pariah dog, whose barking it imitates. It is seldom seen alone but in packs of 10 to 20, and thus united they will attack any beast of the forest, even the tiger. They are swift and never fail in catching what they once give chase to; on coming up with their game, they seize the animal from behind or in front, immediately destroying the eyes and having once fixed themselves, they maintain their position, sucking the blood of their unfortunate victim and never quitting their hold, till it has fallen from pain and fatigue. The samber and other deer are the principal animals they prey upon. Remarkable for his peculiar and piercing yell in moonlight nights is the jackal, so common over the whole of India. Besides feeding on small game and poultry, he is not averse to carrion of any kind. The jackal is no favourite of the planters, for he pilfers a great deal of ripe cherry-coffee, but is honest enough to deposite the beans, which are considered all the better for their transmigration through his body!

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AWS Coorg AWS

*136 The fact is, that, as the jackal eats only the ripest berries, the beans are naturally of a good quality.

The mungoose or Ichneumon Múngos (Viverra mungo *Can.* kíra)—is frequently found on the bánes, where it is seen running from one copse to another. Its elongated, slender body with pearly, ash-grey fur and thick long tail, its pointed head and bright eyes and its rapid movements give it a pretty appearance, and, but for its wanton depredations amongst the poultry, it might become a useful pet, as [824] it destroys rats and snakes. The natives say that after its struggle with a poisonous snake, it takes recourse to the Nágadále (Ruta, Rue) the leaves of which act as an antidote.

Black bears (*Can.* karadi) are found in Marenád on the Pushpagiri, Kóte-betta and Kálur-betta, where there are colonies of beehives, for Master Bruin is very fond of honey. [262] His flesh is not eaten, but pieces of his skin are attached to [789] the necks of horses and cows, to keep off the evil eye. [231]

On the wooded banks of the Hatti and Shóran-hole and elsewhere there are small colonies of a species of otter-hound, which the natives call Nírunái or water-dog (Lutra Nair Cuv.) The animal is deep reddish brown on the back, lightest on the sides and below, lives in artificial burrows and subsists on fish, which it catches with great skill. It is eaten by the Yerawas.

Mice and *rats* there are more of in Coorg, than the farmer and house-owner would wish. The musk-rat betrays itself by its piercing shriek, but has a safeguard in its strong smell against its pursuing enemies. Great havoc has been done on some coffee plantations by the bamboo-rat (Golunda Ellioti) which is gregarious and for want of jungle-food often attacks in great numbers the coffee shrub, selecting the tender and succulent shoots and, to get at them, cutting off the primaries near the stem. Most wary of traps of any kind, this destructive animal is difficult to deal with. The field-rat (*Can.*

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5
Travancore Tribes A v64

C
#136 seen of its body from above is of a dark chocolate colour deepening into black along the centre of its back and tail, while the
C
[231] under parts are of a pale yellowish brown. When young, it is easily tamed and proves an amusing pet, but it tries its sharp teeth on most substances, that come within its power, and too confiding children, when ruffling its temper, may
T
[224] suffer harm. The Kurubas, who know the trees of the forest as familiarly as a police man the streets and houses of his beat, catch these squirrels by means of nets which they fix to branches that are in the track of the animals.

The grey flying squirrel or flying cat (Pteromys) has become better known since the destruction of so many forests, when hundreds of the harmless little animals were caught or shot. It is crepuscular in its habits and, unless disturbed, very rarely seen. Its home is in the holes of trees and it lives entirely on fruit, especially that of the wild sago palm, the toddy of which it is very fond of too. Strictly speaking, it cannot be said to fly, but is endowed with a furry membrane between the fore and hind limbs which enables it, when stretched out, to take leaps of almost incredible extent, sometimes 100 yards through which it passes with the swiftness of an arrow. In its flying mode of progression it moves invariably downwards, when it runs up a new tree and takes another leap, which is well sustained owing to the extreme lightness of the animal The flying membrane or parachute cannot be contracted, but is merely a lateral prolongation of the skin and therefore also covered with hair. The squirrel is of a dark grey colour with a black line down its face, which, with its prominent black eyes and grey nose, give it a peculiarly fiendish look, and it bites severely. Its fur is very soft
C
[262] and might be turned to good use. The flesh of all the 4 species of squirrels is eaten by the natives.

C
[262] The common hare (*Can.* mola) is found chiefly in the open country, where long grass grows. The natives of all

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

classes are fond of its flesh and the poor animal is pursued on all sides by man and beast. It is caught in nets and traps. Rabbits thrive very well and are frequently kept in houses.

There is one kind of porcupine (*Can.* mullu-handi i. e. thorny pig) which like the mungoose lives on shrubby Bâne land, and is hunted for its flesh by smoking it out of its holes or by shooting it. The quills are thrown away; for the natives believe, that, if kept in the house, their presence will occasion quarrels amongst the inmates. In the Ghats one may occasionally observe the destructive operations amongst the ant-hills of the Badgereit or scaly ant-eater (Manis pendadactyla, *Can.* chippina-bekku i. e. scaly cat). Its flesh is eaten and its scales are used as the supports of fiddle and harp strings.

Homebred horses there are none in Coorg, except those wretched Tats, which are kept by Mussulman residents for carrying loads; but "Young Coorg" is fond of smart Pegu ponies or the powerful Kandahar horses. The damp monsoon climate is, however, not conducive to the health of well bred horses, especially new arrivals from a drier country. The Pegu pony is best suited both to the climate and hilly country. The washerman's donkey and the hybrid goat stand the climate equally well, but sheep do not thrive, except in the eastern districts. The long continued rains and the droughts during March and April which are incidental in these months, are unfavourable to the breeding of horned cattle; but, with proper housing and with an economical saving of the decaying grass, that is annually swept away by the jungle fires, and that should be stored up as hay for stall feeding, the Coorg cattle might be greatly improved. Little care, if any, seems to be bestowed upon the selection of bulls for breeding purposes; beasts of every description and age run promiscuously in the herd, and as there is no check by separating inferior bulls or emasculating them, the progeny must deteriorate. In the Kanawe districts, cattle of the finest des-

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practice throughout the whole district by any person whether European or native. 231 778 656 648

J. S. FRASER, *Lt. Col.*
and Commissioner.

Mercara, 16th January 1835.

Whether the sanction of the Government of India was obtained to this prohibition is not apparent, but the Coorgs have always, up to this time, regarded it as binding on the British Government; and, under these circumstances, we must await the dissipation by education of existing prejudices on the subject on the part of the people.

Not venerated like the cow is the bison (*Can.* kádi; Bos cavifrons) which is killed by the Coorgs without hesitation; its flesh, however, is only eaten by the lowest classes. It lives in herds throughout the thickest forests and in the highest hills, especially in Marenád and Hormalnád. The male stands nearly 6 feet high at the shoulder, but disproportionately low behind, and reaches the length of 9 feet from nose to root of tail; the tail itself is almost 3 feet long. Its hump is rather small. When young, the colour of the bison is of a dark reddish hue, which changes with age into a greyish black, the belly, legs as far as the knee-joint, breast and face being, however, of a dirty, whitish tinge. The whole body, especially the dewlap, is covered with long hair and the eyes are of a light blue colour. The horns are short and thick at the base, but gradually become thinner, leaving the tips small and sharp; they are remarkable for the symmetry of their curvature, take a fine polish and the fortunate sportsman may be proud of the trophy. The hide, which is very thick, is used for covering shields. Naturally timid and of retiring habits, preferring shady woods to open glades, except in the cooler parts of the day, the bison, when alarmed or wounded, charges headlong with mad fury his imaginary or

[36* 262 554] [714 237]

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eagerly devours any paper within reach. The female has no horns and is smaller than the male, which reaches a hight at the shoulder of 2 feet 6 or 8 inches. The skin is at all times of a rich fawn colour, spotted with white. In almost every Coorg house one finds some horns of the spotted deer, fixed to the walls for hanging clothes on.

The most delicate and beautiful of the deer-tribe is the jungle-sheep—*Can.* kuringi—which somewhat resembles an antelope. It is about 18 inches high, with short horns, a little twisted, their roots for the first inch and a half being enveloped in hair. Its colour is fawn, lighter towards the belly, i s legs are very thin, but in speed it is like the passing wind. Its graceful form, mild, bright eye and harmless habits make it an interesting little pet, but it does not long survive its captivity. The flesh of all the deer-tribe is highly esteemed by the natives.

The common pig and the wild hog abound, and their flesh is preferred by the Coorgs to all other meat. Both kinds thrive very well, but the former is not bred with any care and its unsavoury habits do not recommend its flesh for European consumption. What the goat is to the Mussulman, the pig is to the Coorg!

The largest of the Coorg Mammalia is the elephant (áne), but it is so well known, that it needs no particular description. The Coorg elephants are as large and powerful as any others of Southern India. They are gregarious, keeping in droves of 15 to 30, under a leader who directs their movements. They inhabit indiscriminately all the woody parts, but particularly those towards the eastern boundary. They are ferocious and mischievous, destroying garden cultivation and crops of paddy and sugarcane. As they are excellent swimmers, the Kávéri is no barrier to their depredations. When met in droves, they seldom attack the traveller, but it is dangerous to encounter a single elephant. Such brutes, called

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*136 Of the third order of birds, the *Rasores* or *Scrapers*, Coorg can make a goodly show with a variety of Pigeons, of which the blue pigeon—*Kg.* tórapakki—is the most common, but the green and the yellow pigeon and the ring-dove are not scarce in the forests. The Peacock (Pavo cristatus; *Kg.* meilu) with its shrill morning call, and the timid jungle fowl (Gallus Bonneratii; *Kg.* kádgóli) with its self-betraying "cockadoodle doo" are numerous in bamboo jungles, especially during the last few years of bamboo seeding. Both species together with the Woodcock and the common Partridge (Perdix cinerea; *Kg.* ganjalakki) and the Quail (Coturnix) are at the time of the ragi crop frequently brought to Mercara for sale by a class of jungle people who are most expert in catching these birds, the voices of which they very cleverly imitate. In the neighbourhood of Subramanya peacocks may not be killed, as they are believed to be the vehicles of the god residing there. The neck-feathers of the jungle cock are much valued for their beauty, each being marked by roundish hornlike plates of various shades of yellow. The Coorgs keep these as trophies, as the Indian does his hairy scalp. The single feathers are turned into artificial flies, to fishes the most attractive bait, and consequently highly prized and dearly paid for by the devotee of "the gentle art." The Crow-pheasant or common Coucal (Centropus rufipennis), distinguished by its cinnamon brown wings, long tail and crow-like head, is very frequently seen on bamboo land, where it hides itself in the dense clumps, uttering as it slowly flies away a deep note like a monkey. It feeds on insects and small reptiles and is eaten by the natives.

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A few representatives of the fourth order of birds, the *Grallatores* or *Waders* are: the Egret (Egretta flavirostris; *Kg.* balya-póle = great crane) which towards the end of the monsoon is frequently seen stalking along paddy-fields or streams in search of prey. It is white as snow, about 3 feet high with

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long yellow legs and straight yellow bill. It keeps in small flocks. The little green Heron (Butstrides Javanicus; *Kg.* kiru-póle = small crane), the Indian Waterhen (Gallinula) and the Plover or Peevit (*Kg.* uppu-títe, imitating its cry) are found in marshy places, likewise the Snipe (Gallinago stenura; *Kg.* bandu-koneya = mud squatter) whose flesh is in great estimation with the Coorgs and Europeans; also the green Sandpiper (Actitis Ochropus) may occasionally be seen.

As there are no large tanks in Coorg, few of the *Natatores* or *swimming birds* are to be found. There is only the Wild Duck or Teal of a larger and smaller species, which the Coorgs call Kóku and Yernnde-pakki; the latter dive under the water, as soon as they observe a hunter and remain submerged for a long time. Geese and Turkeys are kept domesticated, but the cold and wet monsoon weather does not agree with turkeys.

A rapid glance over the remaining portion of the Coorg Fauna will be arrested by but a few species of general interest. The *Reptiles* are represented by two kinds of Tortoises, a variety of Lizards, Snakes and Frogs.

The *Tortoises* are found in paddy-fields and small tanks. The shell of one in my possession is 11 inches long and 7 inches broad, but of a bony nature, unfit for ornamental use. Since the devastations of the coffee-borer common Lizards, Bloodsuckers, and Chameleons, all of them insect-feeders, have become of greater importance to the agriculturist. Alligators are occasionally seen in the Káveri, especially near Rámaswámy Kanawé. Last year one of 9 feet in length was caught in Beppunad with a woman's nose-ring and a silver bracelet in his stomach.

Snakes are rather plentiful in Coorg, but the subject has not yet received sufficient attention, to enable me to give the correct name of the different species. Classifying them as poisonous and harmless snakes, the native name may at least

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#136 or 10 distinct blotched bands below and 8 or 9 dark coloured bands above them run along the sides of the body. The lower jaw is marked on each side by 4 black dots.

The *Stone Loach* (Nemacheilus striatus. Day; *Kg.* Pálavari?) is found in sandy and stony river bottoms, where they lie hidden until disturbed or rising for air, when they quickly come to the surface and as speedily return. It is a small fish; its silvery sides and yellowish brown back are dotted with black. There is a well defined dot at the base of the caudal fin, which gives at the first glance the appearance of the little [262] fish having an eye at each end. If well dressed it is fair eating.

The *Manincha* or Malanchi-mínu (slimy fish) is a kind of Eel, that grows to a length of 6 feet and is perhaps identical with the Murana maculata. Its flesh is very good eating and [262] highly esteemed by the natives for its medicinal qualities [957] against piles.

The *Indian Trout* (Garra Jerdoni. Day; *Kg.* Pandi-mínu i. e. Pig-fish) may be found in all the mountain nullahs; it is about 6 inches long, its head and neck are thick like those of a pig, hence its name. Its colour is a mottled green and grey. It has a suctorial dish under the chin, by which it can attach itself to rocks.

[262] The *Carp or Roach* (Puntius) occurs in several varieties all of which are esteemed good eating.

The *Banded Gold-fin* (Barilius cocsa) is an exceedingly pretty fish about 5 inches long and found only in shallow running streams. The back is greyish blue, with 8 or 9 lateral darker bands, the sides are silvery with blue reflections and fading to white below.

The *Silver-fish* (Chella cultellus) is of about the same size as the former, handsomely shaped and covered with brilliant, silvery scales, which are easily rubbed off.

From August till November the flooded paddy-fields give

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shelter to numerous little fishes from half an inch to 4 inches in length, the smallest is the bitter Keipe, next the Kumbalakotte, the Koile, the Ponakani and the Avari. They are eagerly caught by the natives who are very fond of fish curry. 136* [262]

The shells, which I have been able to collect in Coorg comprise the following: 3 species of the Genus Unio, 2 species of the Genus Helix, the Genus Melania, the Genus Paludina, the Cyrena Malaccensis and the Cyclophorus excellens. The Helicidae are eaten by the natives. [262]

With the termination of the monsoon the insect world, in its varied and often brilliant array, asserts its dominion in the sunny air, the reinvigorated vegetation, on the placid waters and the warm ground. Then is the time for the entomologist to enrich his collection with fresh specimens of the different insect forms, and certainly Coorg offers a rich reward to the enthusiastic lover of nature. A small collection of Coorg Beetles, sent to a German entomologist, was highly appreciated for the variety and beauty of its species. Almost every family of the Coleoptera has its numerous representatives and even a glance over them all, were I able to enumerate them, would be too much for the patience of the reader. Passing over the beautiful family of the Cicindelidæ or Sand-runners and the still more brilliant Buprestidæ and Elateridæ, the powerful family of the Scarabacidæ with the giant Stag-beetle (Lucanus Malabaricus) over 3 inches in length and with light brown elytra; our attention will be arrested by the formidable looking Cerambycidæ or Long-horns, for amongst this family we find the contemptible and yet terrible little enemy of the coffee planters in Coorg and Southern India generally: the Coffee-Borer (Clytus Coffeophagus or Xylotrechus quadrupes) of which our woodcut gives a very good representation. The

The Coffee-Borer-beetle (Xylotrechus quadrupes) slightly enlarged.

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and the pods ripen in October or November, when the sunny weather favors the gathering; perennial plants yield however ripe cotton almost at all seasons; and the monsoon crop is of course lost. My own experience on a coffee plantation near Anandapur with all available kinds of cotton seed led me to the conclusion, that the Sea-Island and Berar-Hybrid would yield most satisfactory results. Egyptian cotton grown in 1865 by Captain Taylor on the Sampáji Ghat produced a fibre, which was pronounced by the Bombay Chamber of Commerce the best that had reached the Bombay market.

The Plantain (Musa paradisiaca) of which there is a wild kind in the hill-jungles, is common all over Coorg near native dwellings. The 10 to 12 feet high succulent stem consists of a number of fibrous sheaths that may be considered the continuation of the leaf-stalks and is at the base nearly one foot thick. The leaves forming a tuft on the apex of the stem are 6 or 8 feet long and 2 feet broad. In the centre of the stem is a white solid substance forming a cylinder throughout its length. It is used by the natives for curry, when broken across, it shows bundles of spiral vessels to great perfection. The continuation of this cylinder beyond the stem forms the flower-stalk, it is therefore evident that one tree can bear but once, after which it is cut down and a new shoot springs up from the root, by which means the plantain is chiefly propagated. The closely packed conical flower head is not unlike a red cabbage in appearance, and by its own weight inclines downward in a graceful curve. Each of the purple leathery leaves or involucres coated with a pale bloom of great delicacy, covers a double row of 9 or 12 elongate yellowish red flowers, extending in a spiral line over one-third of the circumference of the fleshy stalk. With the maturity of each successive row of flowers, the involucre reclines and falls off, and the fruit appears, which when ripe is from 3 to 6 inches long and from half an inch to 2 inches thick. In its spiral clustering

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245 round the stalk, it forms a large bunch numbering from 200
[262] to 300 plantains. The fruit when divested of its skin may be
[251] eaten raw, roasted or baked, or when sliced and dried in the sun, reduced to a kind of flour which is considered very nourishing.

The fruit is supposed to have been the forbidden fruit of Paradise, hence the botanical name of the plant. There is a great variety of plantains, which differ in size, colour and the flavour of their fruit, but all the Coorg plantains seem to be particularly rich in saccharine matter and very nutritious.

[824] The plant is highly esteemed by the natives as the emblem of plenty and fertility and is as such in constant requisition at their marriage and other festivals for ornamenting the en-
[526] trance of houses and temples. Stumps of large trunks occupy also a conspicuous place in their games and amusements, for it is considered a feat of strength to cut one through at a blow with the famous Coorg knife.

248 The *Musa textilis* or "*Manilla Hemp*" Plantain has been
130 introduced by Captain Cole, and I have successfully naturalized it in Mercara. Numbers of shoots have already been distributed for extensive cultivation for the sake of its valuable fibre for cloth and paper-manufacture. The fruit is like the common large plantain, but so full of seeds that it can hardly be eaten.

Along with this plant also *the Rheea or Assam Nettle* (Boehmeria nivea) was introduced, and having successfully reared it in Mercara, I distributed a quantity of roots and cuttings amongst the planters all over Coorg, who find it thriving very well in their sheltered ravines without any further care, but do not yet see how to make the cultivation profitable, owing to the difficulty and expense in preparing the fibre. The plant is indigenous to south-eastern Asia and is known in China as Ma or Chuma and in Assam as Rheea. It is a herbaceous plant, with large, perennial, spreading and

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Auwa[1] at Almanda. The name of one was Timmaya, that of the other Máchu. Máchu had a son Ayappa whose son was Bollu, the father of Stephanas, the first Coorg Christian."

The culinary art of the Coorg women is not much appreciated by a European palate, which relishes less hot condiments and a more sparing use of oil and ghee. Meat, whether game, pork, mutton, fowl or fish is cut into small pieces irrespective of joints and made into a nourishing savoury curry, which, with a dish of boiled rice, seasoned with mango, lime, citron and Ambatti-pickle, makes to native taste an excellent meal. The Coorg women excel in preparing a great variety of pickle and chutney, also sweet preserves and sweetmeats. Their appams or níradóshe are relished even by Europeans. The kitchens of the Coorgs, which are inside the house, are remarkable for the cleanliness of the cooking-vessels in use.

The Coorgs generally take an early meal at 7 of rice-conjee seasoned with pickle or curds. At 10 they partake of a more substantial breakfast, consisting of boiled rice and curry. At 3 o'clock again conjee is taken as in the morning, and in the evening a hearty supper of boiled rice with vegetable or meat-curry and other condiments. Toddy of the Baine-mara (Caryota urens), also a kind of beer made of fermented rice, rice-brandy and arrack are the usual beverages, but lately the strongest European liquors have become only too familiar to the Coorgs at all hours of the day.

As is the custom with other Hindus, the Coorg women attend upon their lords and the male members of the house, before they sit down to their own separate meal. This selfish and unmanly custom greatly detracts from the charm of family life. The meals spread on brass plates, on low stools, are rather animal feeds than family gatherings round the social table.

The Coorgs are very hospitable; no beggar goes away empty from their houses. A visit from Europeans is looked

[1] [Errata: this should read "Dodda-Auva" see corrigenda, Cat. 116, p. 973 -- Analyst]

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preparations ended, the body is carried into the middle apartment (nadumane) of the house and laid upon a funeral bed, near to which a lighted lamp is placed. Instead of oil, those who can afford it, burn on this occasion clarified cow's butter in half a cocoanut placed on a handful of rice in a copper-dish. The whole company gathers round him and breaks out into loud wailing, beating the breast, tearing the hair, much in the usual Hindu style. Guns are also fired in honor of the dead. Towards evening the corpse is brought into the yard, a little water is poured into its mouth by the relatives, and a piece of money deposited in a copper-dish, containing a little cocoamilk, saffron, rice and well-water. Now the body is carried to the burial or burning ground. Each funeral guest approaches, dips his finger into the copper dish, moistens the lips of the corpse with a drop or two, and lays a piece of money into the plate. This collection goes to defray the expenses of the funeral. After all present have thus taken their last leave of the departed, the body is deprived of the ornaments, and laid in the grave or upon the pile, the contents of the funeral-lamp-dish are thrown upon it, and now the covering of the grave, or the burning of the pile, concludes the ceremony. Before this last scene, however, some relatives must be set apart for funeral observances until the Dhiti, the great ceremonial day, which is sometimes celebrated on the 28th day after the death of a person, i. e. at the end of the lunar month in which the decease has occurred, sometimes later, as late as six months, when peculiar honor is intended to be done to the departed. In the interval the relatives, who offer themselves for this service, have to perform a lesser course of fasting. They forego the early and the second meal, at six and nine o'clock. At noon they bathe, prepare their own food, eat part of it themselves (it consists of rice and a little pickled vegetables), and give the rest to the crows, which consume it for the dead. When the Dhiti,

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an armful of rice in the neighbourhood and distributes two or three stalks to every one present. Some stalks are put into the milk-vessel. No one must touch the sheaf-cutter. All return to the threshing floor shouting as they walk on: "Poly, poly, Déva!" (increase, O God!) A bundle of leaves is adorned with a stalk of rice, and fastened to the post in the centre of the threshing floor. The company proceeds to the door of the house, where the mistress meets them, washes the feet of the sheaf-cutter, and presents to him, and after him to all the rest, a brass-vessel, filled with milk, honey and sugar, from which each takes a draught. They move into the kitchen. The Huttari mat is spread, the brass dish, the rice sheaf, and the basket with leaf scrolls, each with a stalk of rice, are placed on it. The young man distributes the bundles to the members of the family, who disperse to bind them to every thing in house and garden, doors, stools, roof, trees, etc. In the mean time he sits down to knead the Huttari dough of rice meal, plantains, milk and honey, seven new rice corns, seven pieces of cocoanut, seven small pebbles, seven pieces of dry ginger, seven cardamom seeds, and seven corns of sesamum are added. Every one receives a little of this dough upon an Ashvatha leaf, and eats it. The ceremony is over, and the sheaf-cutter mixes with the company. Supper follows, consisting of sugared rice and sweet potatoes, into which a handful of new rice is thrown, and of a substantial common repast of rice and curry. The Huttari chants follow now at every house during the night.

But the Coorgs have not yet done altogether, with their pleasant festival. Four after-Huttari-days are added to the holy week. On the eighth day the Urukólu, the village-stick-dance, collects the whole community. The women of two or three houses repair together to the Urumandu, a pair leading and a second pair following, all four beating cymbals and chanting ancient songs or impromptu verses. When

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and when offered, do not exert themselves to retain the boon. However, their wants are not overlooked, a new school will shortly be re-established in Gadinád. These people, who with the exception of the inhabitants of Surlabi-Muttunád behaved badly towards the English Government in 1837, are much under the influence of the Jangams residing in these Náds. There are two Mathas of note here, Mádapur and Abbi-matha, where the Shivácháries possess rich endowments.

The Kanavé-Hoblis are inhabited by a set of people identical with that of the adjoining Mysore ryots. They are chiefly cultivators of dry land and produce horse-gram, rági, various kinds of beans, tobacco, bangh, flax, sesamum and also cotton. The sandalwood tree grows extensively in this taluq. In Yedavanád some rice-fields which have a good water-supply yield two crops; there the wild sago-palm is also carefully attended to for the sake of the toddy drawn from it and for the farinaceous substance, prepared for food by the poorer classes from the inner part of the tree. Honey of the best quality is largely collected in June and much appreciated by the people. Near the village Beradi-kanavé there was the Back-stokade from which the northern column of the Coorg field-force was repulsed in 1834. (Bakka, *Kg.* door-way to a narrow passage.)

Frasерpet is the seat of the taluq and Nád-Kacheri of Nanjarájpatna and the monsoon Head-quarters of the Superintendent. It lies 20 miles to the east from Mercara on an elevation of 3,100 feet above the sea. Situated on the left bank of the river Kávéri in a bent formed by a sudden turn of the river, opposite the Mysore frontier, with which it is connected by a fine stone bridge, and the country, though open, being dotted by rounded grass or wood-clad hillocks on which the European houses are built, Frasерpet offers a most varied and pleasing landscape, especially from the travellers' bangalow, which occupies a rocky eminence, the site